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Senator Opens Campaign to Stimulate Reduction in Cigarette Tar, Nicotine

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—Sen. Warren G. Magnuson (D.—Wash.) has begun campaign designed to stimulate cigarette manufacturers to effect a reduction in the tar and nicotine content of their products.

Outlining his plan to newsmen following three days of hearings to review progress being made in the development of a less hazardous cigarette, Senator Magnuson said that although more refined approaches appear promising, obtaining a reduction in total tar and nicotine would probably be an effective first step on the road to safer smoking.



SEN. MAGNUSON

“Once we have these recommended levels,” he said, “we can look into the possibility of legislation requiring disclosure of tar and nicotine contents on each cigarette package and in all advertising.”

It is the Senator’s hope that the pub-

licity given to the Surgeon General’s recommended limits will create public demand for cigarettes with lower tar and nicotine content—and thus stimulate competition among manufacturers to achieve progressively lower tar and nicotine levels in their cigarettes.

Senator Magnuson, chairman of the Consumer Subcommittee of the Senate Commerce Committee, also suggested that the Surgeon General establish a panel or task force “to evaluate health claims for new filters or processes, and if legislation

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Senate Hearings Call for To Reduce Nicotine and Tar

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records changes in the sound reflection of such legislation should be proposed."

Dr. Stewart, who testified on the final day of the hearings, reviewed the findings published in his latest report on smoking and health (MEDICAL TRIBUNE, July 24, September 4), underscoring the fact that scientific evidence "strongly suggests that the lower the tar and nicotine content of cigarette smoke, the less harmful are the effects."

"The implications of this judgment and the suggested course of action are clear," he told the committee. "For those smokers who cannot quit—and we must accept the fact that there are a great many who will never do so—we must help them to lessen their risks by reducing the level of exposure to harmful ingredients in cigarette smoke."

DR. STEWART The over-all aim, he went on, is to reduce total exposure to cigarette smoke "to such a low level of total dosage that the health risks are at a level which the average knowledgeable smoker might be willing to tolerate."

"It would remain for research, however, to determine what would be the 'tolerable' level for different kinds of people," he added.

The Surgeon General was sharply critical of the cigarette industry's introduction of the 100-mm. cigarette, which, he said, will make more difficult the task of per-

suading people to change their smoking habits by taking fewer puffs and leaving longer butts.

"As research findings continue to confirm and to strengthen the scientific evidence incriminating cigarettes as a health hazard," he said, "it is unconscionable that the cigarette industry should introduce and heavily promote the 100-mm. cigarette, which cannot help but increase the hazard."

The advertisements tell of the cigarette that smokes longer, he said, but they do not say that it also "increases the smoker's total dosage and thereby increases his exposure to the harmful effects of smoking."

"The longer smoke clearly means longer profits for the cigarette industry," Dr. Stewart said. "When the 100-mm. cigarettes were introduced last year, they captured 2 per cent of the market; this year the estimate is they will get as much as 15 per cent."

"If this trend continues, the effect will be to negate whatever benefits might accrue from a shift to a low-tar and -nicotine cigarette," he went on. "Previous evidence indicates that the smoker who turns to a longer cigarette tends to continue to smoke as many cigarettes and more of each cigarette than before."

Dr. Stewart urged the cigarette industry to reconsider its course and "make meaningful efforts to help prevent a bad situation from growing worse."

"Removal of the long cigarette from the market and the promotion of moderation in cigarette use in advertising would be steps in this direction," the Surgeon General said. "An example of moderation in advertising would be to encourage



Honored: Dr. Denton A. Cooley (left), of Baylor University College of Medicine, receives the highest civilian medal given by the Republic of Panama and congratulations from its Consul General, Pana Angel Komkulis. The medal was given in recognition of the heart surgeon's treatment of many indigent patients from Panama.

smokers not to smoke far down on each cigarette."

He explained that studies have shown that the last third of a cigarette when smoked contains almost 50 per cent of the total condensate recoverable from the smoke, whereas the condensate from the first third contains about 25 per cent.

Dr. Stewart said he believes that disclosure of tar and nicotine content on cigarette packages and in advertisements and the responsible promotion of those cigarettes low in tar and nicotine would be constructive and helpful steps to the extent they provide the smoker with as much information as possible on the

risks of smoking and enable him to make his own decision as to the amount of dosage he will accept."

To counteract the likelihood that smokers might be lulled into believing that the low-tar and -nicotine cigarette has no accompanying risk, Dr. Stewart said this could be minimized by use of a strengthened warning label, control over advertising statements, and continuing educational effort aimed primarily at persuading young people not to start smoking.

In other testimony, E. Cuyler Hammond, Sc.D., vice-president for epidemiology and statistics of the American Cancer Society, discussed the attempt that he and Dr. Oscar Auerbach, of the VA Hospital, East Orange, N.J., are making to set up a suitable experimental model for testing potentially less hazardous cigarettes.

"What we seek," he said, "is an experimental animal in which the smoking of ordinary nonfilter cigarettes produces all of the most seriously harmful effects which are produced in human beings by smoking such cigarettes."

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